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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/668,970	09/24/2003	Walter Rosenbaum	2001P05313WOUS	1456

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SIEMENS SCHWEIZ AG
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ALBISRIEDERSTRASSE 245
ZURICH, CH-8047
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EXAMINER

PLUCINSKI, JAMISUE A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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05/10/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/668,970

Applicant(s)

ROSENBAUM ET AL.

Examiner

Jamisue A. Plucinski

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-16, 18, 19 and 21-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 31-41 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-16, 18, 19 and 21-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/22/07 has been entered.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 24 is objected to for being dependent on a claim following claim 24. A series of singular dependent claims is permissible in which a dependent claim refers to a preceding claim which, in turn, refers to another preceding claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 14-16, 18, 19 and 21-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bilbin et al. (US 2005/0197892) in view of Fredman (6,526,393).

5. With respect to Claim 14: Bilbin discloses the use of a method for franking and processing parcels comprising the steps of:

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- a. receiving a parcel franking request from a customer relating to an anticipated delivery, the request comprising delivery data including the address of the recipient (See Claim 1);
 - b. generating a franking number for the delivery (See Tracking number, Figure 58);
 - c. storing the franking number and delivery data in a database (Paragraph 0419 and 420, System database 22);
 - d. transferring the franking number from the dispatch service to the customer for application by the customer in human readable form and where the delivery includes the franking number and the recipient data (See Figure 58 with corresponding detailed description, the label is generated then sent to the customer, for application onto a package, as well as Paragraphs 0375, 0395 and 0401); and
 - e. using the franking number during processing of the delivery to access the delivery data in the database (Paragraphs 0435 and 0448). It should be noted that the limitation of “to determine whether a read recipient address on said delivery corresponds to said delivery data associated with said franking number” is not a positively recited method step and is considered to be intended use.
2. Bilbin however fails to disclose assigning a validity time period to the franking number. Fredman discloses a pre-paid shipping label with a tracking number and an expiration date (the shipping label has an expiration date, therefore the examiner considers the corresponding tracking number to have an expiration date). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to modify Bilbin, to include the expiration

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date, as disclosed by Fredman, in order to encourage users to take action (i.e. ship package) in a timely manner (see Fredman, abstract).

3. With respect to Claim 15: See Bilbin, Paragraph 0048.
4. With respect to Claim 16: Bilbin discloses the use of receiving payment means (Paragraph 0367).
5. With respect to Claim 18: Bilbin discloses the franking number is alphanumeric (See Paragraphs 416-417).
6. With respect to Claim 21: See Bilbin, Figure 0058.
7. With respect to Claim 25: Bilbin discloses the address is printed out, which is in OCR format, as long as it is an alphanumeric character, it is in OCR format, See Figure 58.
8. With respect to Claim 26: See Bilbin Paragraph 0367.
9. With respect to Claims 27 and 28: Bilbin discloses the use of a carrier system, which assigns carrier tracking numbers and uses the tracking numbers for tracking the parcel through the delivery process (Paragraphs 0449-0451).
10. With respect to Claim 29: Bilbin discloses determining the charge for shipping and charging the sender (See Bilbin, Paragraph 0367).
11. With respect to Claim 30: Bilbin discloses that the cost is based on a weight, size and delivery service used (Paragraphs 0192 and 0205).
12. With respect to Claim 19: Bilbin discloses the use of a tracking/franking number, however fails to disclose the initial franking number is a symbol. However, the way the tracking number is arranged, whether they be alpha numeric characters, or symbols is deemed to be

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nonfunctional descriptive material and is not functionally involved in the steps recited. The tracking steps would be performed the same regardless of what type of character comes first in the franking number. Thus this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, see *In re Gulack*, 703 F .2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed.Cir.1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F .3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

13. With respect to Claims 22-24: Bilbin also fails to disclose the limitations of validating the delivery address, checking to see if the address is in a forward address database, updating the address and informing the sending of the forwarded address. Official notice is taken that it is old and well known with the mailing/shipping art, that when anything goes through the mail system the address is checked with a forwarding address database, and the address is forwarded (when you get mail that has been forwarded to you, there is a yellow address label placed on the envelope that states the letter has been forwarded), and on the envelope there is a statement of "address correction requested" which means the sending is notified of the forwarded address. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to check the address for a forwarding address, to ensure the letter/mailling/parcel, gets to the correct person at the correct address.

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

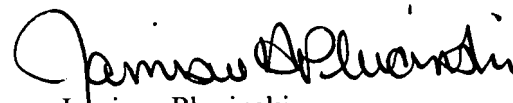
Conclusion

15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Chalmers et al. (US 2002/0152093) discloses the use of shipping labels with franking numbers thereon.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jamisue A. Plucinski whose telephone number is (571) 272-6811. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th (5:30 - 4:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Jamisue Plucinski
Patent Examiner
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